

June 2016

The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

Training addresses hot-button issues

The annual firearms qualification for KCPD members this year is a lot more than shooting drills and hitting targets.

By Chief Darryl Forté's direction, this was the first year sworn members had to qualify twice annually. During the first half of the year, officers also learned about the importance of proximity – both physical and emotional. And during the second round of training to commence in July, officers can expect to learn how and when to provide first aid to a subject after a use-of-force encounter.

Sergeant Ward Smith and the Firearms Training staff developed the new courses. Last year, they got national attention for their work on tactical disengagement and de-escalation training. Sergeant Smith said Chief Forté wants them to keep pushing the envelope on traditional law police training.

"We look at what's causing problems for law enforcement nationwide – not just the mechanical aspects, but the trust issues," Sergeant Smith said.

During the proximity training, participants reviewed tactical disengagement principles, but they also talked about emotional proximity, using as an example the trooper in Texas who arrested Sandra Bland last year. Bland, who was mentally ill and not taking her medication, later committed suicide in a jail cell. The trooper intended to give her just a warning, but she kept saying things that angered him, and he allegedly arrested her without cause.

"There was about 5 to 6 minutes where he could have disengaged her, but he got angry," Sergeant Smith said. "It was an emotional rabbit hole he got himself into."

The trooper now faces a charge of perjury and a wrongful death lawsuit.

Public service is officers' ultimate goal, and that will be the focus of the first aid training beginning in July.

"Only recently has law enforcement been held to the higher expectation of doing something for someone once we've damaged



Sergeant Ward Smith and Firearms Training staff are developing cutting-edge training about caring for suspects injured by police use of force.

them," Sergeant Smith said.

The training will have three parts. The first part will teach officers what a stable scene looks like, and when an officer can switch from the role of enforcer to care-giver.

"We always have to remember our first responsibility is the stabilization phase," Sergeant Smith said. "If the suspect's hand is on the gun, and he's still in the fight, we can't shift to the care-giving phase."

The second part is first aid for the wounded – be it a gunshot or Tazer wound or laceration. First, officers must assess whether they're OK physically and mentally. Then Firearms Training staff will be passing

on what they learned in the advanced first aid course they took from the U.S. military. Sergeant Smith pointed out many KCPD officers already provide or are prepared to provide first aid to subjects they've wounded, with many purchasing their own tourniquets and first aid kits to have on hand.

"We're servants to the public," Sergeant Smith said. "We're right there (after a use of force). If we have the ability to do some of these things and help, why would we not?"

The third part is for officers to articulate why they took the actions they did in reports and courtroom testimony.

Sergeant Smith said the heaviest emphasis will be on reasonableness.

"When we go to court – criminal or civil – and someone sees all the evidence, we want them to say, 'The police were reasonable in their response all the way through,'" Sergeant Smith said. "That's my hope."

Sergeant Smith expects there could be push-back from officers who think it's not their role to provide first aid to a suspect who threatened them. Firearms Training staff extensively discussed those issues while developing the course.

"If you're going to be a cop, you've got to do a lot of things well," Sergeant Smith said.

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Woman finds KC officer who saved her life

When Klynn Scales arrived in Kansas City, Mo., on June 16, Sergeant Jeff Colvin realized his work as a police officer had made a real difference.

She didn't know his name, but 26-year-old Klynn (pronounced Kay-lynn) said she had been looking for Sergeant Colvin for years. She was determined to find the officer who came by her house every day when she was 9 years old to check on her and her two brothers, who gave her hope, strength and ultimately rescued her from a dire situation. Thanks to the work of several people at KCPD, she met her hero.

As a girl, Scales lived up the street from East Patrol Division, when it was located at 27th and Van Brunt. In 1998, she resided with her drug-addicted mother, her 10- and 3-year-old brothers and a constant barrage of her mother's "drug friends."

"They were always coming with drugs and guns and knives," she said. "They threw bricks through our window. But (then-Officer Colvin) came by on every one of his shifts. He was the one person we knew we could count on. We'd see him pull up, and we would all dart outside to talk to him. And when he started coming around, all the drugs and the bad stuff slowed down."

Sergeant Colvin, now assigned to the day shift at North Patrol Division, said he doesn't remember why he started checking on Scales and her siblings. He had been with KCPD for just two years at that time, and he said he'd never checked on a family with such regularity before or since then. He didn't know what it meant then. To Klynn Scales, it meant everything.

"He gave me courage and faith and made me believe I had someone cheering me on," she said. "He told me he would never leave my side and that he will always be there for me. I can tell you he held up on his promise because he never left my heart."

Shortly before Sergeant Colvin started paying regular visits to Scales, she was molested by one of her mother's boyfriends. Then-Detectives Jennifer Jones and Doug Harr worked the case. More on them in a bit.

Also during that time, 9-year-old Scales and her brothers were stealing food from the 7-11 convenience store located across the street from East Patrol because they had nothing to eat at home. Then Scales got very sick, with the illness lasting for more than a month. She remembers being at home and unable to breathe when Sergeant Colvin came in and got her. The next thing she remembered was waking up in a hospital. The diagnosis: malnutrition. Her brothers didn't suffer the same way because Scales stole the food from 7-11 and gave it to them instead of eating it herself.

Shortly after her hospitalization, her mother's boyfriend was convicted

and imprisoned, and Scales and her brothers were removed from their mother's custody. They bounced around different foster homes and shelters, eventually getting adopted by a family that moved them to Texas but further abused them. All the siblings left that family when they turned 17.

As a junior in high school, Scales was working two jobs and living on her own in a run-down apartment. She didn't even know she was eligible for government assistance. But she kept going back to the words Officer Colvin told her as a little girl about being strong and courageous. She graduated from high school and worked her way up from fast food to

waitressing to banking, and now she's an assistant to a gastrointestinal specialist. Beating all the odds, she's never had so much as a cigarette and didn't even try alcohol until she was of legal age. She has two children of her own who are happy and healthy. In two months, she will begin her application process to the Houston Police Department, all because of the impact Sergeant Colvin had on her.

That is why she wanted to find him so badly, especially after she came back to Kansas City in 2013 when her biological mother passed away. In December 2015, Scales sent a private message to KCPD's Facebook page, inquiring if it was the department that had a police station across the street from a 7-11. That was what she remembered from her childhood. As more details of her encounters with KCPD came to light, a series of department members tried to find the officer she sought, eventually getting her into contact with now-Sergeant Jennifer Jones, who worked the case against Scales' abuser in 1998.

"I remembered the details of the case," Sergeant Jones said. "I remembered the unique spelling and pronunciation of her name."

The two began e-mailing and calling each other as they tried to find the mysterious officer who got Klynn Scales through the darkest of times.

"I became intrigued, and being an investigator by nature, I wouldn't let it go," Sergeant Jones said.

Reports from 18 years ago were hard to find. Sergeant Jones ran into wall after wall trying to track the mysterious officer down. Scales kept providing all the information she could recall, hoping it would lead to the discovery of her hero. She specifically remembered him wearing a bracelet engraved with the name of a KCPD officer who'd died in the line of duty.

Finally, Sergeant Jones obtained a list of every currently serving KCPD member who was assigned to East Patrol in 1998. (If that didn't work, she was going to get a list of retired members next.) She sent



Sgt. Jennifer Jones, left, helped Klynn Scales, center, track down Sgt. Jeff Colvin, who had a profoundly positive effect on Scales while she was growing up in a neglectful and abusive home. Scales returned to Kansas City to meet him.

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Changing of the guard for Police Foundation of KC

Since March 2014, Retired KCPD Deputy Chief Cy Ritter has been at the helm of The Police Foundation of Kansas City. Ritter stepped down this past May, leaving the Foundation in the very capable hands of former Kansas City Missouri Police Department Major Ron Fletcher.

Fletcher worked for KCPD for 27 years before retiring in 2015 and moving to Arizona. He returned to Kansas City recently and stepped into the Foundation President position. As noted on the Foundation's Facebook page, Fletcher said, "I'm very happy to be back in KC supporting my KCPD family."

During Ritter's tenure, the Foundation was instrumental in securing funds in excess of \$714,635 from August 2014 to April of this year. These contributions consisted of monetary gifts from private donors, the Call for Backup fundraising events, gifts made through the Foundation and matching funds from the City of Kansas City.

KCPD has benefitted immensely from these donations, enabling the acquisition of an additional K-9 and bullet-resistant K-9 vests; the Care Trak System; several drones with FLIR

(heat-sensing cameras) equipment; camera components for Traffic, Mapping, Kansas City No Violence Alliance surveillance and 7/360 degree cameras and equipment; training sessions in Atlanta, New York and Montreal; numerous surveillance support software packages; as well as a Michael Chou Scholarship.

Betsey Solberg, one of the founding members of the Foundation and the Chair of the Board of Directors since 2011, also is stepping down. Thanks in large part to Ms. Solberg, the Foundation has raised more than \$2 million since its 2010 inception. Re-

placing her is Jerry Reece, with 44 years of real estate brokerage experience, most recently as Chairman Emeritus of Reece and Nichols, a Berkshire Hathaway affiliate.

At a recent Foundation meeting, Fletcher presented Ritter a Certificate of Appreciation while Ms. Solberg also was presented a Certificate of Appreciation, a department baton and a Chief's coin from Chief Darryl Forté for their tireless work and dedication to bring equipment and training that the department could not otherwise afford.

There is no doubt under the direction of Ron Fletcher, the dedication and hard work will continue.



Pictured from left are: Outgoing Foundation Board Chair Betsey Solberg, incoming Chair Jerry Reece, outgoing President Cy Ritter and KCPD Chief Darryl Forté.

FINDING OFFICER, CONT. FROM P. 2

personal e-mails to all of them. Many were interested and thought it was a wonderful story, but they said it wasn't them.

Then when he got back from a vacation and checked his e-mails last month, Sergeant Colvin responded to Sergeant Jones, "I think it's me." He also said he'd just been thinking of that little girl he used to visit by the old East Patrol and wondered what happened to her. Sergeant Jones was thrilled to tell Scales she'd found the officer. Scales booked a flight to Kansas City to meet him.

The whole thing is a little surreal for Sergeant Colvin.

"We often go through our careers wondering if we impacted someone's life in a positive way," he said. "I often questioned whether I chose the right career path. ... I'm thankful she looked for me. Now I know I picked the right career path."

And that bracelet Scales remembered? It was a metal one honoring fallen KCPD Officer Russell Mestdagh. Sergeant Colvin said he wore it every day until it broke in two. He found it, taped it back together and gave it to her. She plans to have the bracelet professionally repaired when she gets home.

Colvin and Jones picked Scales up at the airport. They showed her around her old town and the department. They even drove by her old house, which is now torn down. Now-Reserve Officer Doug Harr joined them for lunch. Harr interrogated Scales abuser in 1998, but he never met her. All the officers were thrilled with how Scales overcame the numerous obstacles in her life.

Scales said she's still "pinching myself that this is real."

She had a hat made for Sergeant Colvin emblazoned with his name and the words, "A True Hero."

As she prepares to embark on a career in law enforcement, Sergeants Jones and Colvin say Klynn Scales could be the hero for another child someday, too.

Canine delivers concert tickets

Canine Officers David Ferber and Jason Brunghardt, along with K-9 partner Rico, had the honor of delivering Selena Gomez concert tickets to Alayna Shelley. Fourteen-year-old Alayna is fighting Very High Risk Pre B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (VHR ALL). The Hudson Project Cancer Charity provided the tickets, as well as a limo for Alayna and mom Liana to and from the venue.



Upcoming Events

July 8
Headquarters Blood Drive

July 12
Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting

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publication of KCPD's
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Officially Speaking

Awards

Special Unit Citation
Drug Enforcement Unit 1820 Squad

Life-Saving Award
Sergeant Marvin Forbes
Sergeant Ryan Hoerath
Officer Jonathan Best
Officer Katie Horine
Officer Shannon Marsh
Officer Timothy Trost

Meritorious Service Award
Sergeant Sean Hess
Master Police Officer Aric Anderson
Officer Matthew Tomasic
Officer Octavio Villalobos
Supervisor Amy Bingham
Supervisor Michael Harper
Supervisor Michael Healy
Supervisor Todd Lane
Supervisor Robert Price
Supervisor Rhonda Taylor
Supervisor Timothy Trainor

Certificate of Commendation
Detective Jeffrey O'Rear
Officer Erik Winter
Detective Kimberly Anderson
Detective Vernon Huth

25-Year Rings

Officer Michael Hammer
Administrative Assistant Virginia Kerr
Fleet Operations Technician Nicholas Taylor
Communications Specialist Vivian Young

Retirements

Sergeant Monica Blackmore
Officer Morgan Pfaff
Officer Matthew Tomasic
Officer Tommy Nichols
Communications Specialist Bryan Eastin
Fleet Operations Technician Nicholas Taylor

Obituaries

Retired Sergeant Michael Singleton
Retired Sergeant Woodrow Loudon

The mission of the
Kansas City Missouri
Police Department
is to protect and serve
with professionalism,
honor and integrity.